

*Recovery Act-funded expansion will improve health care services for area residents*

**Fresno, CA** – Congressman Jim Costa joined with Valley health care providers and patients today to break ground on an expansion to the United Health Centers (UHC) of San Joaquin Valley facility in Parlier. The expansion was made available through a \$1.5 million Recovery Act grant to construct a 20,800 square foot administration building. The new building will house all administration departments under one roof, allowing the facility to operate more efficiently and better serve Valley patients.

“Securing funding for our local health centers is vital to improving access to quality care for Valley families, especially in our rural areas,” said Costa. “This new facility will increase the center’s efficiency and strengthen the services available to residents. United Health Centers plays a critical role in delivering health care to Valley residents and I am pleased that this expansion will allow them to advance their mission.”

“The project is made possible through a \$1.5 million grant from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), which provided the seed money to make the \$4.5 million project a reality,” “This completed campus will be a model for all Community Health Centers for the Central Valley and the State of California. Our patients will be proud to call United Health Centers their health care home.” said Colleen Curtis, CEO of UHC.

Costa has been an active supporter of UHC and their efforts to provide comprehensive medical, dental and community health services to Valley residents. Along with the \$1.5 million grant that made today’s expansion possible, Costa announced \$695,438 in Recovery Act funding in March of 2009 for UHC in Parlier.

The funding announced in March allowed UHC to hire new health care providers and staff to provide medical care to low income and underserved populations in the area. This included 1.5 FTE medical providers, 3 FTE medical assistants, 2 front office staff and .5 FTE billing staff. The additional staff allowed UHC in Parlier to see more patients and decrease wait times for appointments.